Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Vocations rule in the regions

Vocational qualifications outnumbered university level qualifications by two to one in the regional areas of Australia, according to a report released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

"In the cities we saw little difference between the number of people with uni degrees and the number of people with vocational qualifications," said Lisa Connolly from the ABS, "but outside the big cities, there were more than twice the number of vocational qualifications compared to degrees and diplomas."

The rates of attainment for tertiary qualifications varied widely across Australia, from a low of about one-third to a high of two-thirds, and the highest rates were generally in and around the capital cities.

"Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby had the highest proportion of tertiary qualifications, with nearly seven out of ten people living there having a qualification gained after leaving year 12.

"It was a similar story for Perth - Inner and Melbourne - Inner East, where 65 percent of people have a tertiary qualification.

"The lowest rates were in the Northern Territory - Outback and Queensland - Outback where only about one in three people had a tertiary qualification, but it should be remembered that these are some of the most remote areas in Australia."

People in Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby, Sydney - Ryde, and Melbourne - Inner East were the most likely in Australia to have a qualification in management and commerce (21.3, 18.8 and 17.6 percent of people respectively), while Mackay, Hunter Valley (excluding Newcastle), and Western Australia - Outback lead the way in engineering and related technology qualifications (14.8, 13.6 and 13.4 percent).

Further information can be found in Perspectives on Regional Australia: Non-School Qualifications in Regions, 2011 (cat. no. 1380.0.55.011), available for free download from the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au).

Media Note:
Tertiary (or non-school education) refers to qualifications past year 12 and includes certificate level III and IV, diplomas and advanced diplomas, and university level qualifications.
Unless otherwise indicated, regions in this media release refer to Statistical Areas Level 4.
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